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The Good Old Days

*A Pageant of Country Life for Field Day
Meetings Patriotic Celebrations
and Other Occasions*

By

Mary Meek Atkeson

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FOREWORD

Nothing is so important in the training of young Americans as a sympathetic understanding of the early days of our country and of the mettle of those hardy pioneers who led it into paths of greatness. In this simple pageant-play the writer has tried to give vitality not only to that vigorous life of the past but also to some of our hopes for the future, by presenting them in such form that all the young folks of any neighborhood can take part. And the presentation of the pageant will furnish the occasion for one of those hearty democratic and co-operative good times which have been the glory of our American community life in every period of our history.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PAGEANT

THE PAGEANT FIELD

The pageant field should be chosen with care for the beauty of the setting and the comfort of the spectators. It may be a good-sized opening among the trees of a grove, a beautiful spot near a stream, or an open meadow with a hill or trees for a background. The players should, if possible, appear down a vista so that they are seen for a few minutes before they reach the field. Their exit, however, should be as brief as possible.

A natural background of trees and shrubs, with shrubbery to hide the exit, is most desirable. Where the natural growth is too open a few evergreen trees may be cut down and set in the open spaces. Where an artificial background is necessary it may be made of wire fencing, the wire hidden completely with boughs of evergreens.

One of the most important things in a pageant is continuous action. The players must enter the instant the interlude characters have ceased speaking. Since all bulky properties in Episodes I and II are carried on and off by the players, the management of the field is simple. The pedestal for the SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE in Episode III may be made of two

shallow boxes covered with green paper or burlap.

The writer has endeavored to make a pageant which can be used under a great variety of conditions. The form in which it is here presented is suitable for a small field, or indoors, with a crowd of spectators, not too large to be within hearing distance of the speakers.

In general the larger the pageant and the expected crowd the fewer the lines that can be spoken effectively, so some judicious cutting of speeches is often necessary. For outdoor presentation before a small crowd only the Stranger's Indian story and a few of the minor short speeches would need to be omitted. If the crowd is to be very large the Story-Man and the Spirit of the Future may be the only speakers—the children expressing themselves by gestures and the action of the Episodes being exaggerated somewhat, as in moving pictures, and presented without words. In fact, the whole pageant could be given effectively without words if the program made clear to the audience the meaning of Episodes and Interludes.

Any characters who have speaking parts in an outdoor pageant must be chosen primarily for the force, clearness and distinctness of the speaking voice.

When the pageant is given indoors the PIONEER's schooner and the horses may be omitted. By the change of a few words the travelers may be represented as having left their wagon on the trail while they sought a camping place. If the pageant field includes a stream they may arrive in flatboats and

canoes, and the SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE may make an effective appearance in a small gilded boat.

As to its historical accuracy, the pageant will approximate the story of almost any community, but local touches may be added. For instance, the HUNTER in Episode I may become Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, or whoever was the famous Indian scout of that locality. In like manner specific names and characteristics may be given to other characters, and local descendants of those historical persons may be asked to play the parts.

The number of players may vary from fifty to two hundred or more, according to the size of the field and the number of persons available. A small pageant may include very few players besides the speakers, and a large pageant may have many players without speaking parts.

DRESS

PROLOGUE AND INTERLUDES

THE STORY-MAN: Knickerbockers, woolen hose, loose, belted jacket and pointed cap, all in brown. Belt and bindings of cap and jacket of dull green. Long staff of freshly peeled green wood, a part of the bark left at the top to form a design.

GIRL: Pink dress. Hair in ribbon-tied braids or curls. Broad-brimmed hat with ribbons.

BOY: Blue suit. Carries a boy's light rifle.

THE BOGY-MAN: Dressed in gray rags. Cap of rags, falling over his face at appropriate times.

Hands and face marked with gray chalk in fantastic designs.

EPISODE I

PIONEER AND STRANGER: Rough, ill-fitting trousers of jean or homespun, held up by one "gallus" of jean over a shirt of bright color, open at the neck. Heavy boots. Round cap of jean.

WOMEN: Dresses of dark colors with straight waists and full skirts. Aprons of contrasting color. Slat bonnets on their heads.

CHILDREN: Dressed much like their elders, but more ragged, and their clothes either too big or too little.

HUNTER: Suit of brown buckskin—Canton flannel or similar material, with fringed edges on sleeves, trousers and jacket. Moccasins and coonskin cap, tomahawk and scalping knife showing at belt.

INDIANS: Dress similar to that of the HUNTER but lighter in color. Decorations of bright colors, and headdresses of feathers. Faces and hands copper color with blue and yellow war paint.

EPISODE II

MEN: Ill-fitting jean trousers, fronts and backs made just alike. Bright shirts, open at the neck.

WOMEN: Full-skirted calico dresses with white kerchiefs at the neck. Hair in braids, tied with bits of calico.

OLDER WOMEN: Dark dresses, white aprons, kerchiefs and caps.

CHILDREN: Awkwardly dressed, much like their elders.

FIDDLER: Rusty black, long-skirted coat, baggy trousers, long hair.

EPISODE III

THE SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE: Greek robe of fine white material. Small crown and girdle of silver.

CHILDREN: Organization groups in uniform dress. Other children in light colors.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MUSIC

It is often well to arrange a special dance or a fancy drill of some kind for the beginning of the pageant program. This gives time for the late-comers to enter and the crowd to become quiet before the pageant is begun.

EPISODE I

We Cross the Prairie as of Old, words by J. G. Whittier. Sung to hymn tune "St. Anne." Included in "Hymns of Home Missions and Patriotism," five cents, The Century Company, New York City.

Barbara Allen and *The Barnyard Song* included in "Lonesome Tunes of the Kentucky Mountains," H. W. Gray and Company, 2 West 45th Street,

New York City. "Barbara Allen" is also to be found in many collections of old songs.

EPISODE II

Any form of country dance may be used for *Pop Goes the Weasel* and *Old Dan Tucker*, and a local fiddler can usually be found who can play and "call" both to perfection. Music and a full description of both dances, with proper calls, are included in "American Country Dances," Vol. I, G. Schirmer and Company, New York City. Cheap editions of the music only can be secured from S. T. Gordon and Son, 13 East 14th Street, New York City.

For variety, some of the games may be danced to hand-clapping, led by the Fiddler or by some on-looker. Some local expert can easily teach the art to the other players.

EPISODE III

My Own United States, by Julian Edwards, M. Witmarks and Sons, New York City. The words of this song should be printed on the program so that the spectators can join in the final chorus.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

*A Pageant of Country Life for Field Day Meetings,
Patriotic Celebrations and Other Occasions*

BY MARY MEEK ATKESON

PROLOGUE

A GIRL and a BOY come out slowly as if taking a stroll. The BOY carries a light rifle and the GIRL is swinging her hat by the ribbons. After a moment they notice the STORY-MAN approaching from the opposite direction. He carries a long cane or staff of green wood and is poking about with it inquisitively at all the trees and rocks.

GIRL: Look there! Who's that?

BOY: Oh, that's the Story-Man who lives over the hill. He's been there always, I guess. They say he knows the best stories about just everything there is.

GIRL: Goody! Goody! Maybe he'll tell us one. You ask him.

[As the STORY-MAN draws near the BOY approaches him rather timidly.]

BOY: Good day, sir. We thought maybe you knew a story you would tell us.

STORY-MAN *(so suddenly that the children*

jump): Stories! Tell stories! The land sakes, child, there are stories all about you.

BOY: (*looking round him*): I see some trees and some grass—and you—and sister here——

GIRL (*positively*): And that's every single thing there is to see.

STORY-MAN (*shaking his head sadly*): Maybe so, maybe so. You're just like all the rest. You see what you see—when what you ought to do is to see what you *don't* see.

BOY: That's just being silly.

STORY-MAN (*dropping his stick and waving his arms at them*): You're blind. You're deaf, I tell you! You ought to use your other eyes and other ears.

BOY (*feeling about his head*): My other eyes?

GIRL: Why, I've got two. That's all that anybody has.

STORY-MAN: Maybe so, maybe so. Some folks see only what they see and some folks see the past in the present. Even that tree, there, you'd know better if you saw it in the forest where it used to be. How can you know your country unless you see it as it was long, long ago? Now, tell me that?

GIRL (*eagerly to boy*): He is going to tell us a story!

BOY (*impatiently*): Keep still!

STORY-MAN (*waving his staff as if it were a magic wand*): This is a forest glade. There's a great wood round us—the trees are so huge and tall the sunshine falls in little spots among the branches.

This is the Great Wilderness and there is not a sign of any human being as far as you can see. (*The children look about them timidly.*) There are wild animals in the forest, though, and wilder Indians——

GIRL: Oh, I'm afraid.

BOY (*shouldering his gun importantly*): I'm not! I like it.

STORY-MAN (*putting a protective arm about the GIRL and pointing with his staff*): But see there? White men have already come this way. I see their tracks on the grasses. They have lived over yonder—along the great ocean—but now they are coming through the forest to the West.

BOY (*brandishing his gun*): That's what I'd like to do. I could kill Indians! (*Suddenly losing his courage and starting back fearfully.*) What is that?

[THE BOGY-MAN, *dressed in grayish rags and with long gray hair and beard, has appeared from among the bushes so silently that he seems to have come up out of the ground. He moves toward them and shakes his fists threateningly.*]

THE BOGY-MAN (*wailing*): You-oo-oo!

[THE GIRL *screams and hides behind the STORY-MAN in terror.*]

BOY: Who is he? (*He shrinks back, dropping his gun. The three retreat somewhat toward the side of the field.*)

STORY-MAN: Ho, ho! No wonder you're scared. Folks are afraid of him everywhere.

[*He motions the BOGY-MAN back with his staff,*

and draws the fearful children toward the center again.]

STORY-MAN: Now shut your eyes. Now laugh. (*The children laugh nervously. The BOGY-MAN shudders and slips out.*) Now he's gone.

BOY (*shamefacedly picking up his gun*): But who is he?

STORY-MAN (*shaking his head and walking round in a circle*): Don't ask me—don't ask me. Ask me no questions and I tell you no lies. How should I know, I'd like to know? How should I know, I'd like to know? How should I——

BOY (*interrupting*): Listen! What is that sound?

STORY-MAN (*stopping suddenly*): They are coming! Some pioneer is braving the dangers of the forest on his way to the Great West. Come! You shall see what you shall see. Use *all* your eyes and ears!

[*He leads the children off at right as EPISODE I begins. The children are full of curiosity and hang back to look and listen as the pioneers approach.*]

EPISODE I

To the West

The episode begins with a far-off song, more vigorous than tuneful, the creaking of a wagon and the cracking of a whip, as the schooner of the emigrant comes in sight. The PIONEER walks beside the

team, cracking his blacksake whip and singing lustily. The WOMAN and the children in the wagon join the song at times. Song:

We cross the prairie as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West as they the East,
The homestead of the free.

We're flowing from our native hills
As our free rivers flow;
The blessing of our mother land
Is on us as we go.

We'll tread the prairie as of old
Our fathers sailed the sea,
And make the West as they the East,
The homestead of the free.

[As they reach the pageant field the PIONEER looks about him critically in all directions, peering into the forest as if judging the lay of the land for a camp. The WOMAN and children lean from the wagon and crane their necks to see the place.]

PIONEER (*rather doubtfully*): I reckon this here's as good as we'll git—and the team's got to rest a bit. There's wood for fire and water over yonder. (*Points to right.*)

WOMAN: No place for a fight, if the redskins'd come.

PIONEER (*scornfully*): There ain't no Injuns this side the 'Ghany. Reckon I'd be a goin' on like

that if they was? Git out, all o' you, and git to work.

[*The WOMAN climbs down and begins gathering wood for a fire, splitting up some dry bark for kindling and laying a circle of stones or heavy pieces of wood to keep the breezes away. Then she lights the fire with flint and tinder. The little children run about happily, as if glad to be released from the confinement of the wagon. They hide from each other behind the shrubs and pretend to shoot with sticks.*]

[*The PIONEER unhitches the team and leads the animals out to water at right. Although there is no danger near they keep the guns at hand and all seem alert and watchful. The WOMAN drives two forked sticks into the ground, one on each side of the fire, and lays across them a white-oak stick run through a chunk of venison. Pieces of dark bread are brought from the wagon. The children shell some corn and lay the grains on a flat stone in the fire to parch. The older children bring things from the wagon and one fetches a bucket of water from the right. As they gather round the fire they are startled by the sound of broken twigs behind them.*]

PIONEER: What's that? [*He snatches up his rifle and stands on guard. The WOMAN and children draw back fearfully. A man and a woman on horseback enter, leading a heavily laden pack horse.*]

STRANGER: Howdy, friend?

PIONEER: 'Nother jump and you'd got a dose o' hot lead—blamed if you wouldn't.

STRANGER (*laughing*): You must valey that there topknot o' yourn, you're so skeered o' losin' hit.

PIONEER (*rubbing his head*): Best hair I got. Where you bound for?

STRANGER: Lickin' Crick. Where're ye?

PIONEER: 'Bout the same. Light down.

STRANGER: Thanky', sir. Glad to.

[*The STRANGER, a tall, lank man, drops off his horse and his WIFE, a slatternly, meek-looking person, climbs down stiffly and takes a seat by the fire. Then the STRANGER leads out the horses and returns, bringing food from his packsaddles.*]

STRANGER: The worst thing in these here woods is a b'ar or a painter. I hain't had a Injun scrimmage for so long I'm kinder hankerin' for it, blamed if I ain't.

WOMAN (*fearfully*): We don't want no scrimmage of no kind. [*The men cut slabs of meat with their scalping knives from the piece roasting over the fire and gnaw hungrily at it and at the dark bread, wiping the grease from their fingers on their trousers from time to time. The WOMAN is busy eating and giving food to the hungry children.*]

PIONEER (*gulping a drink of water from the bucket*): Venison's dry eatin' with no bar grease to slide her down. I ain't took time to hunt and a bar ain't come my way.

STRANGER: Pemmican's wuss. I've et pemmican nigh onto three weeks at a stretch.

PIONEER: You been far in the woods?

STRANGER: Plumb to the far edge. It's like a paradise out there. Big prairies of grass and posies for the buffaloes to feed on; no trees to chop down, and salt licks with traces o' varmints so thick the ground's pounded hard like the street in a town. A fellow has elbow room a-plenty out there.

PIONEER: Good corn land, I reckon?

STRANGER: Fine land a-plenty for the 'takin' it up. (*At a sound from the forest somewhat nearer than before, the WOMAN starts up and the men listen intently.*)

PIONEER (*laconically*): Painter!

STRANGER: I had a ruckus with a painter, last winter's a year, I hain't fergot yit. (*The others listen eagerly. He picks up a stick and whittles with his scalping-knife as he talks.*) One day I was a-goin' along and up I come on the biggest yaller painter I ever see—eatin' on a deer he'd killed. Well, Streaker, my dog, he was arter him full yelp right into a thicket of laurel when the painter he tuck up a saplin' and looked down like he's goin' to jump. I was a-lopin' along that-a-way when I see a big buck Indian slippin' up on me with his piece ready.

Well, off I split around the painter and here come the red devil a-bustin' right under the saplin'. And that there painter, he just spraddled out and down he come all cat-er-claws—him a-lettin' one big yowl and the Injun lettin' a bigger one. He trips up in the laurel bresh, and over they went a-rasslin' like two old he-cats a-fightin'.

PIONEER BOY (*eagerly*): What did you do?

STRANGER: Well, I just thunk as how it wa'n't no painter o' mine, noway, so Streaker and me—we tuck the back track home.

PIONEER (*chuckling*): I'd like to a' been there. I shore would.

STRANGER (*hands the rude doll which he has whittled to one of the little children and pulls out a tuning fork from his pocket*): Want a tune? [*He sings:*]

In Scarlet Town where I was born,
There was a fair maid dwellin',
Made every youth cry "Well-a-day!"
Her name was Barbara Allen.

All in the merry month of May,
When green buds they were swellin',
Young Jemmy Grove on his deathbed lay,
For love of Barbara Allen.

So slowly, slowly she came up,
And slowly came she nigh him,
And all she said, when there she came:
"Young man, I think ye're dyin'."

PIONEER BOY: Can't you do another one?

STRANGER (*flattered*): I've sung a many a one in my time. I tell you what. [*He pauses, strikes the tuning fork again, and begins to sing:*

I had a cat and the cat pleased me,
I fed my cat under yonder tree,
Cat goes fiddle-i-fee.

I had a hen and the hen pleased me,
I fed my hen under yonder tree,
Hen goes chim-my-chuck, chim-my-chuck,
Cat goes fiddle-i-fee.

I had a duck and the duck pleased me,
I fed my duck under yonder tree,
Duck goes quack-quack,
Hen goes chim-my-chuck, chim-my-chuck,
Cat goes fiddle-i-fee.

[The others join in the refrain and the children clap their hands with delight. In the midst of the song the bushes crackle and they all start up. The HUNTER, in coonskin cap and buckskin clothing, enters warily.]

HUNTER: I ain't no varmint, but I mought 'a' been. Shet up yer racket. Them Injuns'll git ye sartin.

PIONEER: Injuns!

[He seizes the bucket of water and throws it on the fire. The women catch up the food and utensils and hurry the whimpering children toward the wagon.]

HUNTER: Scoutin' party dropped down the river at sunup this mornin'. I been on their traces ever since and they wa'n't fur off when I heard yer racket over here.

STRANGER: 'Pears like a fight to me.

PIONEER (*handling his gun nervously*): I heard a "gobble, gobble," just now. It might be them——

HUNTER: Keep the women in the wagon and

make the younguns lay down low. Keep a bullet in yer mouth, and yer powder handy. An empty gun is the wust thing in creation in a rumpus.

[The women are loading an extra gun in the wagon and cutting bullet patches of cloth for the use of the men. The men feel the edges of their tomahawks and scalping knives and look about for trees to hide behind. At a movement to the left the men slip behind bushes and watch tensely.]

[Immediately several Indians fire and rush upon them. The men dash forward and there is a fierce fight, shifting back and forth across the field. One Indian falls and is dragged back by his companions.]

[The men breathe heavily and utter exclamations as they fight. A child cries out in the wagon, then stops suddenly as if a hand had been placed over its mouth.]

[The STRANGER drops his shot pouch and has to chop bits from a chunk of lead to reload his piece. The PIONEER tears bits from his shirt for wadding. The HUNTER and an Indian have a hand-to-hand encounter. He gets the Indian down and is in the act of cleaving his head with his tomahawk when another Indian throws himself upon him and they roll over and over in the struggle. The STRANGER falls, shot through the shoulder. His WIFE jumps down and shoots from behind the wagon. Then the Indians give back and the HUNTER and the PIONEER rush out after them.]

HUNTER (*as he runs out*): Take that, ye everlasting varmint!

[*For a moment nothing is heard but the groans of the wounded man and the stifled sobs of his WIFE, who has run to him and lifted his head a little. The WOMAN peers from the wagon, but sensibly stops to reload her gun before she descends.*]

HUNTER (*returning*): They cleaned out down the crick. If my powder had a-held out I'd 'a' got the last tarnal red devil of 'em all.

STRANGER'S WIFE: Oh, is he killed?

[*The HUNTER goes to the STRANGER and pulls back his shirt.*]

HUNTER (*shaking his head*): Ball's gone clean through, I reckon. He'll pull out after a bit. Here's some spikenard tops I just now hit on. It's the soothinest poultice in the hull woods.

[*He bruises the plant between two stones and helps the WIFE bandage the shoulder with it.*]

WIFE: How we'd a-done without the help you give us——

[*The HUNTER shrugs his shoulders and goes to help the PIONEER, who is clearing a place in the wagon. They lift the wounded man in and his wife climbs in beside him. Then they bring in the horses and hitch them up and the WOMAN and the older children climb on the STRANGER'S horses.*]

PIONEER (*looking about him doubtfully*): I'm turned all about.

HUNTER (*wetting his finger in his mouth and*

holding it over his head): Wind's to the west. *(Then he looks carefully at the trunks of the trees. Points to right.)* That's your way. Keep up the crick a spell and then bear over to the right. You ort to hit the river by dark, I reckon. I'll traipse along.

PIONEER (*as HUNTER seems to be leaving*): It's a sight, the good you done us in the fight.

HUNTER: I've fit Injuns these ten year and I'm allus lookin' for a tussle. See thar.

[He points to his gun barrel, and the PIONEER reckons up the notches, each standing for an Indian victim.]

PIONEER (*soberly*): It's a long way.

[He has apparently spoken of the line of notches, but he looks off down the trail which he is to travel to the west and is lost in thought. The HUNTER slips off quietly into the forest, and the WOMAN and children wait patiently.]

PIONEER (*rousing himself and taking a look at the priming of his gun*): It's a long way, but it's a great country out there. Gee, there, Jerry, git ap!

[The schooner and the group of pioneers move out slowly to the west.]

INTERLUDE I

[As the STORY-MAN and the children return the GIRL rubs her eyes.]

BOY (*staring down the trail the pioneers have taken, and shouldering his gun*): I'd like to go with them and fight the Indians.

GIRL (*fearfully*): And did all the little children get killed by the Indians?

STORY-MAN: Oh, my, no. Those folks settled down in the West and built their cabins and cleared their corn patches—and others came and built their cabins and cleared their corn patches, until there wasn't any chance for the Indians to hurt them any more.

BOY: How did they build their cabins?

STORY-MAN: Out of the big trees they cut down, the holes well chinked with mud and the chimneys of cat-and-clay. They were good, warm houses, too, and I guess the hard work they had just made their frolics all the sweeter.

BOY: Oh, let us see them, too!

STORY-MAN: The red men have gone long ago and the people of the settlements are happy. Everybody helps everybody else to work and to play in their backwoods fashion. Even the great dark forest has gone.

BOY (*looking about him*): Why, things don't look the same, do they?

STORY-MAN (*waving his stick*): This is a backwoods clearing. Those big charred stumps are all that is left of the huge forest trees.

GIRL (*as a faint sound of music comes from the distance*): Listen! I think I hear something!

STORY-MAN (*cocking his head and peering out at entrance*): Now, maybe you do, honey, maybe you do. It sounds to me as if some sort of frolic was a-brewing.

GIRL (*as the BOGY-MAN steals out from the*

bushes): Oh, there he is again! I'm afraid!

BOY: Who? (*Looking round.*) Oh!

[*They run to one side fearfully as the BOGY-MAN advances, stretching out his long arms, from which the sleeves hang in tatters.*]

BOY (*indignantly*): He'll keep the settlers from coming here. (*To STORY-MAN*): Take your stick and drive him out!

STORY-MAN: I'd like to, child (*shaking his head sadly*), but it would take a bigger stick than mine to drive him out.

BOY: But who is he—who is he?

GIRL (*as the BOGY-MAN disappears*): I don't care who he is—now he's gone.

BOY (*listening*): He's scared them clear away now.

STORY-MAN: Oh, no, I guess not. Listen! The music has begun again. Now, if you'll look sharp it may be that you'll see some of the fun the cabin people had in the clearings long ago.

[*As the children hang back, delightedly capering to the music, he laughingly pretends to drive them before him with his staff until they are off the field.*]

EPISODE II

A Settlement Frolic

[*A merry group of settlers approaches. First comes the old FIDDLER, dressed in a greenish suit which has once been black, his long hair hanging about his shoulders. He is sawing*

away the tune of Sourwood Mountain on "Ole Sal," his fiddle, which he holds firmly against his chest.]

[Behind him come the backwoods gallants in jean trousers and bright shirts, carrying great baskets of corn. They jostle each other in fun and each tries to show his physical prowess by carrying his basket in some new and difficult way. One, who has been putting on the most airs, drops his basket and spills the corn near the edge of the pageant field. The calico-dressed girls enter a little more demurely, but teasing each other and giggling self-consciously. The older people carry little children on their shoulders or lead older children. Some of the group carry rough three-legged stools for seats. There is a great deal of joking and laughter when the awkward fellow spills his corn.]

FIDDLER (*turning about to look at the ground*):
Here's the spot. All down!

[The young men set down their baskets in two groups or sides, between which the girls wait expectantly.]

[The FIDDLER chooses captains for the two sides. The captains then choose the others, calling out the backwoods names lustily—BETSEY, SAL, NANCY, JANE, ELLY, GABE, HANK, BILL, LIGE, ZIP. The older people stand looking on or sit on the stools, at times watching the huskers and at times, as is shown by their gestures, telling exciting tales of Indians, wild cats and other backwoods dangers. The children run

in and out and get in the way generally. Finally they snatch some corn, shell it and, with the grains, play jack-stones or other games in the foreground. One boy shells a handful of the grains, and puts them down the back of another, who makes laughable attempts to shake them out. A grandmother rolls up the corn husks into dolls, with corn silk for hair, for the little girls to play with.]

[Meanwhile the young people husk the corn, throwing the husks into one pile, the ears into another, and trying to see who can empty the basket first. Once or twice a girl finds a red ear and is kissed by the nearest youth amid the laughter of the others. The fellows tease the girls for trying to find red ears instead of working.]

ONE: She'll be an old maid shore. She ain't found nary a red one yet!

[Sometimes one tries to shift some of his corn to another basket and there is a scuffle when it is replaced. One teasingly catches a girl's long braid and wraps it round her head over her mouth. She sputters, slaps him vigorously, and tells him, "Leave me be!"]

[The FIDDLER loudly announces the winning side. The young folks on that team cry tauntingly: "Slow poke, slow poke, go get an ox yoke!" LIGE and ZIP find red ears at the same moment and both try to kiss the same girl. ZIP strikes LIGE, and they clinch. The others stand behind them in a semicircle as they wrestle, making

comments and seeming much amused at the spectacle.]

LIGE: You'll git that face o' yourn trimmed up for a funeral. Blamed if you don't.

ZIP: You're an eternal liar!

ONLOOKER (*as the men roll on the ground*): No gougin'! Gougin's no fair!

OTHERS: Wallup him right while you're at it, Lige. Give him a whalin'.

A WOMAN: The land sakes, what a ruction!

ONLOOKER (*egging them on*): Who stole a cake out'n the fire?

ANOTHER: Who went to the woods with no scalpin' knife!

FIDDLER (*impatiently waving his fiddle*): Hey, there, hey! You're spilin' the frolic. Wait till to-morry and tear yourselves plumb to bits if you want to.

ONLOOKER: 'Twouldn't be no loss, nohow.

A WOMAN: We ort to hate 'em clean outen the settlement.

ANOTHER: Huh! Tongue-lashin' won't hurt them tough hides none.

[*The men pull the fighters apart forcibly.*]

LIGE: I did!

ZIP: You didn't! (*As he is dragged back.*) Any feller as says you did—I'll lick him twice!

WOMAN (*to Lige*): Lemme put some vinegar on that there eye of yourn. [*She ties up his eye with a plaster and they join the others.*]

ZIP (*to Fiddler*): Tune up Ole Sal, and let her go!

[*The FIDDLER strikes up Pop Goes the Weasel and the dancers, young and old, form two lines for the dance. A few onlookers sit by and make suggestions or comments, or pat their hands in time to the music. All sing as they dance, and the FIDDLER calls the changes:*

All around the cobbler's bench,
The monkey chased the weasel;
The peddler kissed the cobbler's wife,
Pop goes the weasel!

A penny for a cotton ball,
Another for a needle;
That's the way the money goes,
Pop goes the weasel!

My wife she is awful sick,
The baby's got the measles;
Sally's got the whooping cough,
Pop goes the weasel!

[*In general they dance with much earnestness. Occasionally a youth trips up a girl as she passes, so that he can catch her to keep her from falling, but the others frown upon this, as it spoils the dance. When the children grow troublesome they are slapped and put out of the set. When a man and his partner drop out of the dance and find but one stool unused, he holds her on his lap.*]

[*When this dance is finished some one calls loudly for Old Dan Tucker, and amid much laughter one man is pushed into the center of the circle*

to be TUCKER. They dance and sing as before:

Old Dan Tucker was a nice old man,
He used to ride the Darby ram,
It sent him whizzing to the foot of the hill,
If he's not got up he lies there still.

Chorus:

Out o' the way for Old Dan Tucker,
Come too late for to get his supper,
Out o' the way for Old Dan Tucker,
Come too late for to get his supper.

Old Dan Tucker's still in town,
Swingin' the ladies all around,
First to the east, then to the west,
Then to the one that you love best,
(CHORUS.)

[There is much teasing of the left-over youth who becomes TUCKER at the end of each change in the dance. As they are dancing, a conch shell sounds at the right and a boy enters blowing the shell lustily, then calling:

Potpie's ready, hot an' bilin',
Jest a-spilin', come a-pilin'.

[The dance breaks up with much laughter. The men wipe their moist brows with their sleeves and puff noisily.]

HANK (*smacking his lips*): Um! Chicken potpie. That's the stuff that sticks to your ribs!

BILL: That's no lie. No slops for me, nor spoon victuals, neither.

[*They seize the baskets of corn and the stools and rush off, singing Old Dan Tucker.*]

INTERLUDE II

[*The children run out laughing. The STORY-MAN holds his staff against his chest and is sawing away with his bow arm as if he were playing a fiddle, while the children caper about. Then he lays his staff on his shoulder, half projecting in front and half behind. The children each seize one end of it and, singing Old Dan Tucker, dance round and round him.*]

STORY-MAN: That's a great how-de-do, twisting a poor old fellow up like that!

GIRL: You like it, you know you like it, just as much as we do!

STORY-MAN: Maybe so, maybe so.

GIRL: Oh, didn't they have fun! Let's all go back to settlement times! I like them best of all.

BOY: I like the Indians best.

STORY-MAN (*shaking his head*): Those days are all gone by, folks say—and yet they've not gone either. Your other eyes will tell you that our days are good because those other days were here before us, and the future will be made, it's likely, from what *our* days are now.

BOY (*doubtfully*): We haven't any such good times now.

STORY-MAN: Listen! I think I hear your play-mates coming now.

[A burst of childish laughter comes to them. The STORY-MAN turns as if to go. The GIRL clings to him at first, then looks back, hesitates, and joins the other children as they enter. The BOY, more resolute, marches out at once to join them. The STORY-MAN stands to one side, rubbing his hands and looking at them all delightedly.]

EPISODE III

To-Day and To-Morrow

[A large group of children approaches. Some of them are blowing tin horns or beating drums. Some are singing London Bridge is Falling Down, or other childish jingle and all are happy and gay. As they reach the pageant field, each group begins its own activity, as if oblivious of all the others, and the field is a scene of great liveliness and many shifting groups. Always some one group holds the center and focuses the attention of the audience upon a phase of work or play which reflects the life of the previous episodes. Each group holds the center for only a few minutes, then gives way to another. The center groups may include:

1. CAMPFIRE GIRLS in Indian dress prepare to build a ceremonial fire.
2. BOY SCOUTS, or any other group of boys,

give first aid to a wounded comrade and carry him off in a stretcher.

3. LITTLE BOYS *in Indian suits play Indian.*

4. LITTLE GIRLS *play singing games.*

5. CORN-CLUB BOYS AND GIRLS *contest at corn stringing.*

6. A GROUP OF GIRLS *presents a rhythmic dance.*

7. A GROUP OF BOYS *plays paper chase or hare and hounds.*

While the children are playing the groups of characters from the other episodes enter silently and arrange themselves at the rear of the field as a background. In the midst of their playing the STORY-MAN claps his hands vigorously, and the BOY and GIRL run to him.]

STORY-MAN: This is to-day, built up from all the days that used to be. (*Waving his staff.*) See how your friends of other times look down upon you, now, and wish you well. (*The children turn in surprise to stare at the silent groups behind them, but show no fear.*) Our days will grow and grow into the future.

GIRL: What do you mean by that?

STORY-MAN: The future is to-morrow and the next day and the next. Can't you see her coming? Open your other eyes and look. Open your eyes wide!

[He points to the left and the children turn to look. They watch as the SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE, a tall girl in a simple Greek robe, ap-

proaches to the sound of music from hidden instruments.]

CHILDREN (*eagerly*): Who are you?

THE FUTURE: I am the Future. I am to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow, and you are mine—you children—for your days are all to-morrows. There are no Indians for you to fight——

BOY (*eagerly*): I wish there were.

THE FUTURE (*smiling at him*): But there are tasks as great and difficult. You must fight the love of self, the stupid waste of human happiness, and all the evil forces that array against our better life.

You need not hew the forest to make a path to your good neighbor, but you must run the shining roads—to every farthest farmhouse all the country over. Over these roads the children and their elders will ride for study and good times together, the farm crops will go speeding to the markets, and the postman will bring the people all the story of the world.

You need not dip your candles nor make round cups of clay for bear-grease lights. Yet you must stretch away those slender wires—to every home, to bring the heavenly current that will light the house and turn the wheels and lift the heaviest burden of their toil.

You need not chop the trees to build a cabin for your home—yet build you must—and greatly. I see great houses rise where all the people gather for worship and for learning, for plays and games and sports of every kind. There you can help each other in your work and in your play, and neighbors will be neighbors, then, indeed.

To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow—see, I come! Can you not catch the vision? Come, and help me make it true. (*To STORY-MAN.*) We need you, sir, with your good tales of Indians and pioneers. Open our other eyes and other ears lest we forget those yesterdays from which we grew. (*Turning to audience.*) And, oh, to-day, we need you most sincerely. Set for us that foundation, strong and sound, for on that I, To-morrow, stand and there we build the days that are to come. (*To the BOY and GIRL, with a gesture toward the quiet groups below her.*) But most of all I need you children. That fair to-morrow men have dreamed of will be great only if you are great. Yours are the brains and hands that shape the future, yours the feet that run its errands here and there. Will you come?

ALL THE CHILDREN (*jumping up as if to follow her*): Yes, oh, yes! (*The BOY and the GIRL cling to her robe and the least child of all climbs up the steps toward her. All stand looking as if longing to go. The FUTURE stretches out her arms to the children.*) And you will help me bring that new day to the world? Then put your right hand up—oh, very high.

[*The children wave their hands eagerly.*]

GIRL (*wildly, as the BOGY-MAN enters, and the children shrink back in great fear*): Oh, there he is again!

THE FUTURE: Who is he?

STORY-MAN: He is the Spirit of Distrust of Happiness, I've heard say, and never any place nor any time is safe from him. He is the kill-joy to every kind of innocent pleasure.

[*The children huddle together fearfully as the BOGY-MAN goes in and out among them, mumbling to himself.*]

THE FUTURE: He cannot hurt them.

STORY-MAN: No, but he fills their minds with fear of everything. He whispers, "You are happy, something dreadful must be going to happen!" Or he says, "You are happy. Repent! Happiness is wicked and you will burn in Hell!"

BOY (*indignantly*): But how does he know all that?

STORY-MAN (*shaking his head*): Nobody knows, nobody knows. He says he read it in the Bible—but I've looked and looked and never found it there.

THE FUTURE (*to the BOGY-MAN*): You have no place in this new life of ours.

STORY-MAN (*shaking his head sadly as the BOGY-MAN moves toward the exit*): He goes, but he comes back again!

THE FUTURE: Then he must not go! My children, seize him! Do not let him go!

[*The BOY and another older boy run after the BOGY-MAN, chasing him a little beyond the entrance and returning, dragging between them a dummy dressed exactly like the BOGY-MAN. They drag him roughly up the steps before the SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE, and make him stand or kneel before her.*]

THE FUTURE: Distrust of Happiness, you shall not rule my Kingdom of To-morrow.

[*The children have recovered from their fright and all look to THE FUTURE.*]

THE FUTURE (*to* DISTRUST OF HAPPINESS): With your old tales of dangers in pure childish joy, the Past has feared you, and the Present, but I, the Future, will grapple with you and show you for the vile thing that you are.

[*She stoops and seizes DISTRUST OF HAPPINESS by the shoulders, then stands in triumph. The BOGY-MAN has disappeared and in her hands are only wisps of straw and old gray rags. The STORY-MAN stretches out his hands as if to bid the BOGY-MAN farewell.*]

BOY (*excitedly*): Why, he's nothing—nothing at all!

STORY-MAN: He was a Superstition and he lived until the light of knowledge came and showed us what he was. Now we can follow freely where true knowledge leads. (*He bows before THE FUTURE.*)

THE FUTURE (*dropping the fragments of the BOGY-MAN and stretching out her hands to the children*): And you will come?

ALL THE CHILDREN (*crowding toward her*): Yes, oh, yes!

THE FUTURE (*to the audience*): They come! They come! Success is to the strong, and we are strong. Let us lead the way from old good times to future days of better times than any in the past. Come, let us go! Thus we shall serve our children—the fields we love—this nation that we love—and all humanity!

[SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE *begins singing and all the children join with her. Song:*

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

My native land, my country dear,
Where men are equal, free,
For thee each morn new love is born,
Sweet land of liberty.

With tears my eyes are filling fast,
Yes, tears that joy awaits,
With love I cry, "For you I'd die!
My own United States."

From golden youth to silver'd age,
Tho' feeble feet may lag,
With joy each heart bids age depart,
When gazing on our flag.
The flag that ever leads the van,
Whose courage naught abates,
The flag of youth, the flag of truth!
My own United States.

[*During the singing the final march is begun. The SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE and the STORY-MAN lead the procession. The BOY and the GIRL march next, and behind them the other children, marching two by two. If there is sufficient room the procession may make a few turns about the field before the exit at right. Then the pioneer and settlement groups, who have been singing while the others marched, continue the procession upon the field, the INDIANS in their war paint closing the parade.*]

[*As the last figures disappear a bugle sounds TAPS for the end of the pageant.*]

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